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NEWSCASTER: The C.I.A. deals in secrecy. That's its business. Reporters, it follows, have a tough time finding out what's going on inside C.I.A. headquarters. But intelligence expert David Wise has learned of some personnel moves not widely publicized elsewhere. In his commentary tonight, Wise suggests what implications those moves could have.

DAVID WISE: Covering a secret intelligence agency is a little like covering the Kremlin. They don't talk much about what happens inside the walls. So, reporters have to draw conclusions from little things, like who shows up at public appearances, or what shifts in personnel really mean.

In the same spirit, it's valuable to explore some quiet shakeups that have occurred inside the C.I.A. Little or nothing has been said publicly about these changes, but word has a way of seeping out to those who watch the walls.

In the first change, C.I.A. Director William Casey has tapped two former clandestine operatives to handle the agency's dealings with Congress and the press. J. William Doswell, a former Richmond public relations man who headed Casey's Congressional and press relations, has left C.I.A. Casey split the job in two. He named ~~Clare~~ George, until now the second-highest clandestine operator in the agency, to handle Congress. He put George Lauder, another former spook, in charge of public affairs.

C.I.A. hands deny that the agency's desire to shore up Congressional and public support for its covert operation in Nicaragua was behind these moves.

Perhaps even more significant is another inside change, disclosed here for the first time. Robert Gates, director of the C.I.A.'s intelligence arm, has been named, as well, Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, the little-known body that prepares the agency's vital national intelligence estimates.

These are the predictions of future events on which the President relies. Up to now, the Council had a separate Chairman. When he and Gates disagreed, that was reflected in the reports flowing to the President.

Gates is not likely to disagree with himself. The result is bound to be a tidy uniformity in C.I.A. estimates, instead of a healthy diversity.

This is David Wise, for CNN, in Washington.